

Andrew Durkee Artist Statement

There's curiosity in the ways sound can be twisted at the fingertips of an individual. For me, it's become an obsession of sorts. Since I was a child I've had this intense enthusiasm for creation that evolved into a passion when I discovered rudimentary music software on my little Nintendo DS. Thankfully, I have since graduated from my Nintendo handheld to programs such as Ableton and ProTools, and my enthusiasm has since grown into an undying love to create art. Since the age of ten, the insatiable desire to surround myself with music has led me to join orchestral and jazz ensembles, learn several instruments such as the trumpet and guitar, take jazz piano instruction, and to dedicate every spare moment of my existence to exploring sound.

Growing up as a Latinx creative, I have always had difficulty finding a place where I felt I belonged. My family comes from Mexico, but since we've lived here for three generations, I've been ostracized at times by my first and sometimes second generation peers. From one end of the cultural spectrum to the other, I have had experiences where my white peers have othered me and have had conversations with brown friends where the term "whitewashed" arises. I have pride, but over time I have had to come to terms with the complexity of my identity and unfortunately understand that some people may not be able to let me exist without giving me a label. Because of this, music has been a true safe space for me all my life. It's given me freedom to express myself and defy the conventions of genre, in ways that mimic my own complex identity.

My journey with music started with a childhood filled with my mother's soulful R&B, and my two older brother's rap, experimental rock, and electronica. My teen years were spent playing brass in jazz ensembles and experimenting with digital sounds on the family computer. All these diverse pockets have been tossed into the melting pot that has become my consciousness and, as a result, led me not only to create work that branches across a wide variety

of genres, but has given me perspective when understanding other artists and assisting their sonic visions.

As for my own work, I'm striving to explore soundscapes that exceed conventional ideals, but still stay grounded in a familiar realm. I've worked closely with local poets to create sound walks that detail the process of healing after a traumatic event, have produced sound art that explores the complexities of colonization and urbanization, and have created works of pop music that bleed into the realm of experimental. Whether it be through dense electronic arrangements or the combination of modern and traditional recording practices, I aim to explore the wandering moments between our comforting dreams and harsh realities.